

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, August 6, 2004

MPDC RAISES ITS EMERGENCY RESPONSE LEVEL TO "ORANGE"

Following the announcement last Sunday by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge of increased threats to the financial sector in DC, New York City and northern New Jersey, the MPDC raised its emergency response level to "Orange" and implemented a variety of security precautions based on the threat information. The threats specifically named the headquarters of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group in Northwest DC as possible targets of terrorist activity. In response, the MPDC has coordinated efforts with the organizations' private security forces and stepped up patrols—including additional stops of trucks and other vehicles—in the area around the IMF and World Bank. In addition, the MPDC has implemented some limited traffic and parking restrictions and has activated Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras specifically in this area. Because the threat information pertained to the "financial sector," the MPDC has also met with other financial-related businesses and organizations to discuss security preparations. Chief Ramsey has emphasized that local neighborhood patrols have not been diminished as a result of the additional steps being taken around the IMF and World Bank; these assignments are being handled through an overtime detail and specialized units. The Chief also pointed out that the MPDC is not responsible for, and is not staffing, street closures and checkpoints that the US Capitol Police implemented this week around the Capitol building.

① For information about the limited traffic restrictions around the IMF and World Bank, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2816>

① Read Secretary Ridge's statement announcing the heightened terrorist alert for the financial sector in DC, New York City and northern New Jersey at:
<http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=3870>

① The MPDC offers private organizations suggestions on how to enhance security in their facilities during heightened terrorism alerts. Access the PDF document at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/pubs/pdf/crisisplanning.pdf>

① For additional emergency preparedness resources, including DC's Family Emergency Preparedness Guide, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/emergencypreparedness.shtml>

DC CELEBRATES NATIONAL NIGHT OUT IN A BIG WAY

The raising of the terrorism threat level in DC to "Orange" just two days earlier didn't dampen the city's spirit when it came to National Night Out 2004. Thousands of residents across the District took part in a variety of crime prevention activities as part of DC's celebration of "America's night out against crime." A few hundred residents of the Naylor Gardens and Hillcrest communities joined Mayor Williams, Chief Ramsey, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, Ward 7 Councilmember Kevin Chavous, and other criminal justice and community leaders for the official citywide kickoff. In his remarks, Chief Ramsey told the crowd that, at the grassroots level, fighting terrorism and fighting street crime are not all that different. "Just as we have stood up to the problems of street crime, we can—and we must—stand up to the threat of terrorism. Not by hiding in our homes—but by getting out and getting on with our lives, by sharing information with the police and one another, and by coming together to prepare for, and to help prevent, these types of incidents," he said. In addition to the kickoff, the Mayor, the Chief and other leaders visited a number of National Night Out events, including a community festival near the Yuma Street, SE "hot spot," an "Orange Hat" block party in Northwest, and a Latino community festival in Adams Morgan.

① Chief Ramsey wishes to thank all of the police officers, community leaders and residents who made this year's National Night Out such a success. Without your spirit and support, community policing in the District of Columbia would not be what it is today.

① o make its post-event report and awards application as comprehensive as possible, the MPDC would appreciate photographs, flyers or other documentation from local NNO events in DC. Send your materials to Kevin Palmer, MPDC, 300 Indiana Avenue, NW, WDC 20001, or email him at:
kevin.palmer@dc.gov

CRIME IN DC DROPS SHARPLY IN JULY

Reports of serious crime in DC declined by 17.5 percent in July, when compared to the same period of 2003, according to preliminary statistics from the MPDC. There were reductions last month in every major crime category, including a 19 percent drop in homicides, a 16 percent decline in robberies and a 23 percent reduction in stolen autos. Crime reductions were also recorded in each of the seven police districts during July. Through the first seven months of the year, preliminary statistics indicate a 12 percent overall reduction in crime in DC. This includes a 16 percent drop in violent crime and an 11 percent reduction in property crime. So far this year, sexual assaults have shown the largest decline (-32%), followed by homicides (-25%), thefts from auto (-21%) and robberies (-19%).

MPDC STEPS UP ENFORCEMENT OF CURFEW LAW

As part of its plan to reduce crime committed by and against young people, the MPDC is stepping up its enforcement of DC's curfew law and making some changes in how the law is implemented. During the last two weeks of July, MPDC officers picked up approximately 500 juveniles on curfew violations – a substantial increase over previous activity levels. In addition, the MPDC has opened two curfew centers where officers will now bring most curfew violators: one at Douglas Junior High School in Southeast, the other at Shaw Junior High School in Northwest. The young people will be kept at the center until a parent, guardian or responsible adult can pick them up. Eventually, the curfew centers will include social services that will be made available to curfew violators and their families. DC's curfew applies to all young people under the age of 17. During the months of July and August only, curfew runs from 12:01 am to 6 am, seven nights a week. During the other 10 months of the year, the curfew on "school nights" begins an hour earlier.

NEWS & NOTES

New Commander of 2D. Chief Ramsey this week promoted Robert J. Contee to commander of the Second Police District in Northwest. Contee joined the MPDC as a police cadet in 1989 and a sworn officer in 1992. Most recently, he served as captain in charge of the MPDC's Violent Crimes Branch. Details on Commander Contee at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/2nd/commander.shtm>.

MPDC Career Expo on August 14. Anyone interested in an exciting career with the Metropolitan Police Department is encouraged to stop by the 5th Annual Career Expo, on Saturday, August 14, from 9 am – 5 pm. Applications, on-site testing and displays of MPDC equipment and training will be available. For details on Career Expo 2004, including the requirements for becoming an MPDC officer, go to <http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/officer.shtm>.

New Officers Sworn In. Twenty-three new MPDC officers are hitting the streets following graduation ceremonies Friday afternoon. The new officers, all of whom completed approximately 24 weeks of training, are being assigned to neighborhood patrols among the seven police districts.

MPDC Urges Blood Donations. Chief Ramsey joins leaders of the American Red Cross on August 11 for a news conference and blood drive designed to heighten public awareness of the critical blood shortages facing the DC area and to encourage people to donate blood. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2818>.

① Preliminary 2004 crime statistics for each of the seven police districts and the city as a whole can be reviewed at: http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/crstats_readthis.shtm

① For a fact sheet on DC's curfew law, its enforcement and alternative programs for young people, go to: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/curfew.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 8/6/04)

- 2004: 112
- 2003: 157
- % Change: -28.7%
- Closure Rate: 56.3% (63 closures)

Adult Arrests (week end. 7/31/04)

- Total: 950
- Drugs: 131
- Weapons: 12
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 7
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 35

Firearm Recoveries (as of 8/4/04)

- August: 9
- July: 155
- 2004 Total: 1,210

Traffic Fatalities (as of 8/6/04)

- 2004: 33
- 2003: 41
- % Change: -19.5%